

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISTANB 00147 140621Z

13-12

ACTION EUR-12

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SY-05 AID-05 OMB-01 CU-02 /074 W

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R 131410Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6885

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL IZMIR

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PINS, TU

SUBJ: TWO UNIVERSITIES CLOSED FOLLOWING LEFT-
RIGHT STUDENT VIOLENCE

REF: ISTANBUL 99, 100

SUMMARY: AS A RESULT OF DISTURBANCES FOLLOWING SHOOTING OF
TWO STUDENTS JAN 12, THE GOVERNING BOARDS OF ISTANBUL (IU)
AND ISTANBUL TECHNICAL (ITU) UNIVERSITIES HAVE RECESSED CLASSES
UNTIL A SOLUTION IS FOUND TO PRESENT CRISIS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE GOVERNING BOARDS OF ISTANBUL (IU) AND ISTANBUL TECHNICAL
(ITU) UNIVERSITIES ANNOUNCED JAN. 12 THAT CLASSES HAVE BEEN
SUSPENDED INDEFINITELY FOLLOWING DEMONSTRATIONS
PROTESTING THE SHOOTING OF TWO STUDENTS EARLIER IN THE DAY NEAR
ITU'S MACKA MINING FACULTY. IN ANNOUNCING THE DECISION THE IU
GOVERNING BOARD CITED AS ITS PRINCIPAL REASON THE " ANARCHIST
ACTIVITIES" WHICH HAVE SPREAD THROUGH EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN
ALL PARTS OF TURKEY. THE COMMUNIQUE STATED THAT THESE VIOLENT
ACTIVITIES HAD MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE UNIVERSITIES TO GUARANTEE
THE SAFETY OF THEIR FACULTIES AND STUDENT BODIES, AND PROMISED TO
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RESUME CLASSES AS SOON AS THE CURRENT CRISIS COMES TO AN END.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, TWO STUDENTS, OZER ELMAS AND KEMAL NABI UNAL WERE FIRED UPON IN AN AMBUSH NEAR THE ITU MACKA MINING FACULTY. ELMAS, WHO IS SAID TO BE AN IMPORTANT FIGURE AMONG LEFTIST ACTIVITISTS AT ITU, IS IN CRITICAL CONDITION AFTER RECEIVING FOUR BULLET WOUNDS. HIS COMPANIONS' WOUNDS WERE LESS SERIOUS. NO ASSAILANT WAS CAPTURED, ALTHOUGH ONE PRESS ACCOUNT QUOTES A PURPORTED EYEWITNESS WHO CLAIMED THAT THE WOULD-BE ASSASSIN DID NOT LOOK LIKE A STUDENT. THE LEFTIST PRESS CLAIMS THE TWO WERE ATTACKED BY "COMMANDOS" AIDED BY THE POLICE; THE CONSERVATIVE PAPERS HAVE LABELLED IT A FIGHT BETWEEN MARXISTS AND MAOISTS.

3. THE SHOOTING INCIDENT PROVOKED IMMEDIATE REACTION FROM LEFTIST AND RIGHTIST MILITANTS AT ITU AND ELSEWHERE IN THE CITY. "COMMANDOS" AND REVOLUTIONARY STUDENTS CLASHED WHILE TRYING TO OCCUPY ITU BUILDINGS IN ORDER TO HOLD PROTEST "FORUMS" TOOK PLACE AT ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY AND ITS AFFILIATED TECHNICAL SCHOOLS OF JOURNALISM AND ACCOUNTING. A BOMB EXPLODED IN THE STUDENT CANTEEN OF THE GALATASARAY SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING, BUT THERE WERE NO INJURIES. LEFTIST STUDENTS AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS BOYCOTTED CLASSES FOR A DAY OUT OF SYMPATHY FOR THIER WOUNDED COMRADES. SECURITY UNITS HAVE BEEN STATIONED AT THE TWO CAMPUSES.

4. COMMENT: THE DECISION TO CLOSE TWO OF TURKEY'S PRINCIPAL UNIVERSITIES UNDERSCORES THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS VIEW THE THREAT OF LEFT-RIGHT VIOLENCE AND THE INABILITY OF THE AUTHORITIES TO COPE WITH IT. THE CLOSURE SUGGESTS THAT HAVING EXHAUSTED THE RANGE OF SULTIONS OPEN TO THEM, THE RECTORS HAVE DECIDED TO PLACE THE PROBLEM SQUARELY BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT. IN THE MEANTIME, THE SUSPENSION OF CLASSES MAY FURTHER AGGRAVATE THE SITUATION, SINCE IT LEAVES THE MILTANTS FREE TO AVENG THE "BLOOD OF THEIR MARTYRS" AND THUS PERPETUATE THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE.

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